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CONFIDENTIAL

13 February 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: IAC Agency Views on NIE-53: Probable Soviet Courses of Action with Respect to Germany during 1952

1. With reference to paragraph 8 of the estimate, GHI disagrees with the view of the other agencies and the Board that a complete ground blockade will not be reinstituted in Berlin so long as the Kremlin hopes to influence the course of events in West Germany. (GHI has not yet submitted a footnote stating its view.) The other agencies and the Board base their view on the belief that any such action would tend to accelerate West German rearmament, the very thing the Kremlin is now using every means to block or retard.

2. The Air Force takes the same exception it took to NIE-50, namely, that the possibility of a Soviet withdrawal from East Germany should not be ignored. The other agencies and the Board believe withdrawal is unlikely during 1952, because of the overwhelming evidence of Soviet intent to integrate East Germany with the Soviet orbit and because the Soviets would lose very great economic, military, and political advantages if they withdraw.

3. During the consideration of the estimate, some agency representatives urged that NIE-4, published on 1 February 1951, is still valid and could have been reaffirmed with a few necessary revisions. In scope, the present estimate covers the same ground as NIE-4 and supersedes it. The Board thinks NIE-4 failed to distinguish relative degrees of probability in various possible Soviet actions and left open important questions on which it is now possible to estimate. NIE-53, in the Board's view, provides a much firmer basis for policy decisions.

4. Since NIE-53 is very brief and is itself a series of conclusions, it was agreed that separate conclusions would be superfluous.

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